Leshy

Leshy, in Slavic mythology, the forest spirit. The *leshy* is a sportive spirit who enjoys playing tricks on people, though when angered he can be treacherous. He is seldom seen, but his voice can be heard in the forest laughing, whistling, or singing. When the *leshy* is spotted, he can be easily recognized; for, though he often has the appearance of a man, his eyebrows, eyelashes, and right ear are missing, his head is somewhat pointed, and he lacks a hat and belt. In his native forest the *leshy* is as tall as the trees, but, the moment he steps beyond, he shrinks to the size of grass.

The *leshy* is a spirit of fairly homogeneous characteristics that are familiar to most Slavs living in heavily forested areas; the Ukrainians living in steppe country lack a fully articulated *leshy* and know about him from hearsay.

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